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Serial No. 10/086,104

CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) In a distributed network which is registered with a unique
5 domain name, said network comprising a number of clients and a number of
authentication servers, said clients and said authentication servers being
communicatively coupled to each other via a global telecommunication network, each of
said authentication servers having a fully qualified domain name which is a local host
name with said unique domain name appended, a distributed authentication system,
10 wherein a given user enters a global user identification (GUID) and a password for
authentication to be carried out at a target authentication server, said GUID comprising
a user name, a delimitation symbol, and a domain portion which is same as the local
host name of said target authentication server, said distributed authentication system
comprising:

15 a client means for parsing an entered GUID and extracting said domain portion
therefrom;

means for appending said unique domain to said domain portion to form a fully
qualified domain name (formed FQDN);

means for translating said FQDN to an Internet Protocol (IP) address representing said
20 target authentication server;

means for sending said user name and password to said target authentication
server for authentication;

means for carrying out said authentication at the target authentication server and
generating an authentication result token that is recognizable by all authentication
25 servers registered in said distributed network;

responsive to said generating said authentication result token,

means for ~~distributing~~ and caching said authentication result token on a
participant authentication server; and at least one of said

means for distributing said authentication token to any participant authentication
30 server[[s]] registered in said distributed network.

2. (original) The distributed authentication system of Claim 1, further comprising:

Serial No. 10/086,104

means for automatically mapping any unrecognized FQDN into a default server which carries out authentication on the user's authentication request.

3. (original) The distributed authentication system of Claim 1, wherein said means for
5 translating consults a domain name system (DNS) to obtain an Internet Protocol (IP) address representing said target authentication server.

4. (original) The distributed authentication system of Claim 1, wherein said means for
10 translating consults a local mapping list to obtain an Internet Protocol (IP) address representing said target authentication server.

5. (currently amended) A method for providing distributed authentication service, wherein a given user enters a global user identification (GUID) and a password for authentication to be carried out at a target authentication server, said GUID comprising
15 a user name, a delimitation symbol, and a domain portion which is same as the local host name of said target authentication server, said method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

entering the user's GUID and password;

20 parsing said entered GUID and extracting said domain portion from said GUID
by a client;

appending a unique domain name to said domain portion to form a fully qualified domain name (FQDN);

looking up said FQDN in a domain name system (DNS) to obtain an address representing said target authentication server;

25 sending said user name and password to said target authentication server for authentication;

carrying out said authentication at the target authentication server and generating an authentication result token that is recognizable by all authentication servers registered in a associated distributed network; and

30 responsive to said generating said authentication result,
~~distributing and~~ caching said authentication result on a participant authentication server; and

Serial No. 10/086,104

~~distributing said authentication token to any at least one of said authentication~~
server[[s]] registered in said distributed network.

6. (original) The method of Claim 5, further comprising the steps of:

5 if said step of looking up fails, automatically mapping an unrecognized FQDN into a default server which performs authentication on the user's authentication request.

7. (currently amended) In a distributed network which is registered with a unique domain name, said network comprising a number of clients and a number of
10 authentication servers, said clients and said authentication servers being communicatively coupled to each other via a global telecommunications network, each of said authentication servers having a fully qualified domain name which is a local host name with said unique domain name appended, a method for providing distributed authentication service, wherein a given user enters a global user identification (GUID)
15 and a password for authentication to be carried out at a target authentication server, said GUID comprising a user name, a delimitation symbol and a domain portion which is same as the local host name of said target authentication server, said method comprising the steps of:

entering the user's GUID and password;

20 parsing entered GUID and extracting said domain portion from said GUID by a client;

appending said unique domain name to said domain portion to form a fully qualified domain name (FQDN);

checking a local list of registered fully qualified domain names (FQDN) to obtain
25 an Internet Protocol (IP) address for said target authentication server, wherein each FQDN in said local list is mapped to a unique IP address;

sending said user name and password to said target authentication server for authentication;

30 carrying out said authentication at the target authentication server and generating an authentication result token that is recognizable by all authentication servers registered in said distributed network; and

responsive to said generating said authentication result,

Serial No. 10/086,104

~~distributing and caching said authentication result token on a participant authentication server; and~~

~~distributing said authentication token to any participant at least one of said authentication server[s] registered in said distributed network.~~

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8. (original) The method of Claim 7, further comprising the step of:

if said step of checking fails, automatically mapping an unrecognized FQDN into a default server which performs authentication on the user's authentication request.

10 9. (currently amended) In a distributed network which is registered with a unique domain name, said network comprising a number of clients and a number of authentication servers, said clients and said authentication servers being communicatively coupled to each other via a global telecommunications network, each of said authentication servers having a fully qualified domain name which is a local host
15 name with said unique domain name appended, a method for providing distributed authentication service, wherein a given user enters a global user identification (GUID) and a password for authentication to be carried out at a target authentication server, said GUID comprising a user name, a delimitation symbol and a domain portion which is same as the local host name of said target authentication server, said method
20 comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

entering the user's GUID and password;

parsing said GUID and extracting said domain portion by a client;

appending said unique domain name to said domain portion to form a fully qualified domain name (FQDN) in said unique domain;

25 checking a local list of registered fully qualified domain names (RFQDN) to obtain an Internet Protocol (IP) address for said target authentication server, wherein each RFQDN in said local list is mapped to a unique IP address;

if said step of checking fails, looking up a domain name system (DNS) to obtain an Internet Protocol (IP) address representing said FQDN;

30 sending said user name and password to said target authentication server for authentication;

Serial No. 10/086,104

carrying out said authentication at the target authentication server and generating an authentication result token that is recognizable by all authentication servers registered in said distributed network; and

responsive to said generating said authentication result,

5 ~~distributing and caching said authentication result token on a participant authentication server; and~~

~~at least one of said distributing said authentication result to any participant authentication server[[s]] registered in said distributed network.~~

10 10. (original) The method of Claim 9, further comprising the step of:

if said step of looking up fails, automatically mapping an unrecognized FQDN into a default server which performs authentication on the user's authentication request.

15 11. (currently amended) A method for providing distributed authentication service, wherein a given user enters a global user identification (GUID) and a password for authentication to be carried out at a target authentication server, said GUID comprising a user name, a delimitation symbol and said target authentication server's domain name, said method comprising the steps of:

entering the user's GUID and password;

20 parsing said entered GUID and extracting said target authentication server's domain name by said client;

pre-pending said common local host name to said target authentication server's domain name to form a fully qualified domain name (FQDN);

25 checking a local list of registered fully qualified domain names (RFQDN) to obtain an address for said target authentication server, wherein each RFQDN in said local is mapped to a unique address;

sending said user name and password to said target authentication server for authentication;

30 carrying out said authentication at the target authentication server and generating an authentication result that is recognizable by all authentication servers registered in a associated distributed network; and

responsive to said generating said authentication result,

Serial No. 10/086,104

distributing and caching said authentication result token on a participant authentication server; and

~~at least one of said~~ distributing said authentication result to any authentication server[[s]] registered in said distributed network.

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12. (original) The method of Claim 11, further comprising the step of:

if said step of checking fails, looking up said FQDN in a domain name system (DNS) to obtain an address representing said target authentication server.

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13. (original) The method of Claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

if said step of looking up fails, automatically mapping an unrecognized FQDN into a default server which performs authentication on the user's authentication request.

15 14. (currently amended) In a distributed network comprising a number of clients and a number of authentication servers, said clients and said authentication servers being communicatively coupled to each other via a global telecommunications network, each of said authentication servers having a fully qualified domain name which is a local host name with its domain name appended, a method for providing distributed authentication
20 service, wherein a given user enters a global user identification (GUID) and a password for authentication to be carried out at a target authentication server, said GUID comprising a user name, a delimitation symbol and said target authentication server's domain name, said method comprising the steps of:

entering the user's GUID and password;

25 parsing said entered GUID and extracting said target authentication server's domain name by a client;

checking a local list of domain names to obtain an Internet Protocol (IP) address for said target authentication server, wherein each domain name in said list is mapped to a registered authentication server's IP address;

30 sending said user name and password to said target authentication server for authentication;

Serial No. 10/086,104

carrying out said authentication at the target authentication server and generating an authentication result that is recognizable by all authentication servers registered in said associated distributed network; and

responsive to said generating said authentication result,

5 ~~distributing and~~ caching said authentication result token on a participant authentication server; and

at least one of said distributing said authentication result to any participant authentication server[[s]] registered in said distributed network.

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15. (original) The method of Claim 14, further comprising the step of:

if said step of checking fails, automatically mapping an unrecognized domain name into a default server which performs authentication on the user's authentication request.

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